



I-29/I-35 EIS & Location Study

MoDOT has begun an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate and recommend long-term improvements to the I-29/I-35 corridor from just north of the Missouri 210 interchange, south to the Paseo Bridge and west to the Broadway Bridge.

Why Are Improvements Needed?

To reduce congestion and improve safety.

- Congestion increases travel time, fuel costs and pollution.
- The number of crashes in this corridor is increasing. Additional traffic, without increased capacity, creates the potential for more crashes.
- Insufficient shoulders create problems. Narrow shoulders (or no shoulder at all) mean that a simple flat tire – at the wrong time and place – can create a major traffic jam.
- Entering and exiting can be difficult. Many of the existing interchange ramps are too short or too close together to meet modern design standards, which adds to the congestion and safety concerns.

To address future travel needs.

- Drivers in the area know that this corridor is already heavily used, and forecasts show that traffic volumes will continue to increase.
- The Paseo Bridge is 50 years old. The Paseo Bridge will need significant additional rehabilitation (beyond work slated for 2005) if it is to remain in use for the next 50 to 75 years. Both rehabilitation and replacement options are being considered.

Purpose and Need

The project's formal purpose and need will guide the decision-making process. Concepts that don't adequately satisfy the purpose and need have been screened out. For those concepts that meet the purpose and need, the EIS process will review possible impacts in detail, ultimately leading to a recommended alternative (or alternatives) for long-term improvements.

Purpose and need criteria include:

- **Roadway Deficiencies** – How well does it meet state and federal design standards for safety and efficiency?
- **Traffic Safety** – How well does it meet driver expectations?
- **System Linkage** – How well does it connect and serve the surrounding communities?
- **Transportation Demand and Capacity** – Will it provide sufficient capacity to meet future travel demands?
- **Economic Development** – How well does it provide access to major employment or other activity centers? How well does it serve commercial, freight and intermodal travel?

News on I-29/I-35
Environmental Impact
Study
from the Missouri
Department of
Transportation

Fall, 2004

How Will Decisions be Made?

First, concepts are screened through the purpose and need criteria. The remaining concepts will go through a detailed evaluation of impacts called an EIS/Location Study. That evaluation process will help determine which of the feasible alternatives best avoids or minimizes negative impacts. The EIS will also provide an early estimate of project costs.

Beyond the facts and figures, however, is MoDOT's commitment to respond to community concerns and desires. Your input will help MoDOT develop a long-term solution that balances the need for improvements with the need to minimize negative impacts. Within the formal EIS process, there will be a public hearing to review the recommended alternatives. That hearing is currently scheduled for late 2006.

In the meantime, we encourage your ongoing input. The study team will be at business and neighborhood meetings, at employment centers and community centers throughout the course of the study. Additionally, you may reach us by phoning MoDOT at (816) 622-6500 or by e-mail at I29I35EIS@htnb.com.

Your interest and suggestions are critical to the success of this project.

The Improvement Process

Plan

- **Area-Wide Approach:** The first step was the Northland-Downtown MIS, which defined general ideas and locations for transportation improvements. That work finished in 2003.
- **EIS/Location Study:** The EIS process is mandated by the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for major public projects. NEPA requires that alternatives be evaluated based on their impacts. Some of the factors that must be considered include the natural environment; things like water, air and threatened or endangered species.

Social and economic factors must also be considered. That includes things like possible impacts to people who live, work or own businesses nearby, as well as their access to schools, shopping and other services. Additionally, impacts to the man-made environment – things like historical and archaeological sites, cemeteries and parks must also be measured. The I-29/I-35 EIS is scheduled for completion in 2006, and will include a recommendation or "preferred alternative" for the type and location of long-term improvements.

Design – Once the EIS is completed and funding identified, detailed design work can begin.

Build – When design work is complete and construction funding secured, the plans will be finalized, any needed property will be purchased, construction contracts let and construction will begin. At this time, MoDOT projects that work will begin after the year 2010. Construction activities may be phased.

Transit, Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

The Northland-Downtown MIS, as well as other studies, found that the best location for these facilities is on or near the Heart of America Bridge. This study will look at area needs to ensure that future pedestrian, bicycle and transit patterns and plans are consistent with earlier recommendations, and if not, update those recommendations.

The I-29/I-35 EIS Process

Step 1: Concepts – Develop a wide range of ideas and concepts for each component of the project – increasing highway capacity, improving interchanges, river crossing and downtown loop.

Step 2: Concept Screening – Which of the ideas meet the purpose and need criteria? Which ideas are feasible?

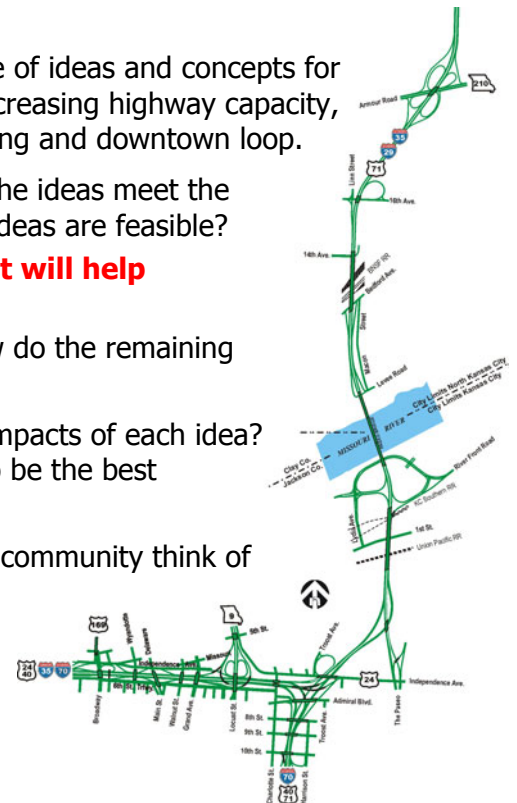
We are completing Step 2 – Your input will help us start Step 3!

Step 3: Reasonable Alternatives – How do the remaining ideas work together?

Step 4: EIS Evaluation – What are the impacts of each idea? Of doing nothing? What appears to be the best possible solution?

Step 5: Public Hearing – What does the community think of the proposed solution? Have we missed anything?

Step 6: Final EIS – Identify the best reasonable alternative, based on purpose and need, EIS evaluation and public input.



Widening Alternatives – The team is evaluating possible widening of I-29/I-35 from just north of the Missouri 210 interchange to the northeast corner of the downtown loop. Possible alternatives include adding two or four additional lanes and/or the use of lanes designated for multi-passenger vehicles (HOV – High Occupancy Vehicles). The team is working to determine the best number of lanes to meet future needs as well as where they might be located.



Interchange Alternatives – Many of the interchanges within the 4.7 mile long corridor do not meet current design and safety standards, including some that have merge and exit lanes that are too short. The team is working to determine the best way to improve those interchanges.

Downtown Loop Coordination – The I-29/I-35 EIS includes planning to improve the north leg of the downtown loop. The loop, however, is a very complex traffic system. New downtown development plans and other major improvement efforts add to that complexity. The I-29/I-35 EIS team is working with Kansas City, MARC and other area leaders to coordinate improvement plans to make sure that each part comes together to improve traffic flow and safety in the central business district.



Bridge Alternatives

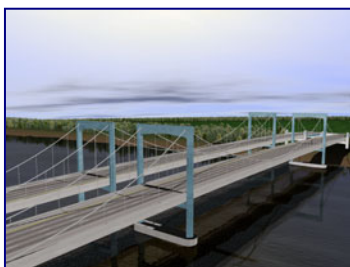
Along with evaluating the impacts to the natural and built environment, costs and ability to meet purpose and need, the screening and evaluation of bridge alternatives includes several unique factors:

- **History** – The bridge's age and its status as a historic structure must be considered.
- **Navigation and River Impacts** – Pier locations in the Missouri River are important, as well as the necessary approvals by the U.S. Coast Guard and coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Missouri River Levee districts.
- **Aesthetics** – The existing Paseo Bridge is a community landmark, and MoDOT recognizes the need for community input when considering different bridge alternatives.

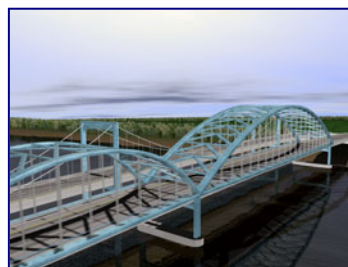
At this time, there are three options for long-term improvements to the Missouri River crossing:

1. **Complete further rehab** (beyond work scheduled for 2005) of the Paseo Bridge to extend its life another 50 to 75 years. No additional structures would be built.
2. **Build a companion structure** next to the Paseo Bridge and complete further rehab of the Paseo Bridge (beyond work scheduled for 2005) to extend the Paseo Bridge's life another 50 to 75 years.

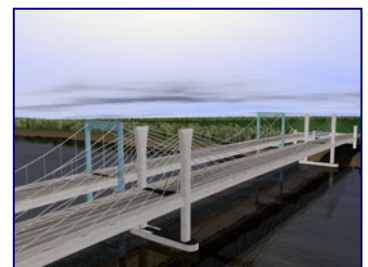
Companion structure concepts:



Twin/Suspension



Tied Arch



Cable-Stayed

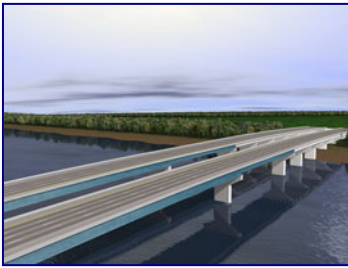


⌘ approximately \$20 million in 2004 dollars

Companion bridge estimates include additional Paseo Bridge rehabilitation.

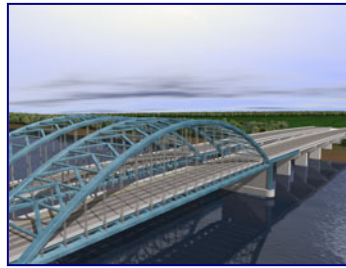
3. Build an entirely new crossing, which would consist of two structures. Replacement bridges would be built in two phases. The first bridge would be built, and traffic would move from the existing Paseo to the new bridge. Next, the existing Paseo Bridge would be torn down, and the second bridge built in its place.

New crossing concepts:



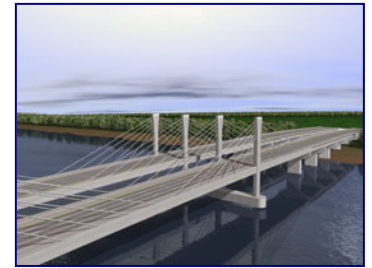
Deck Girder

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Tied Arch

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Cable Stayed

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A deck girder bridge could include architectural enhancements.

⌘ = approximately \$20 million

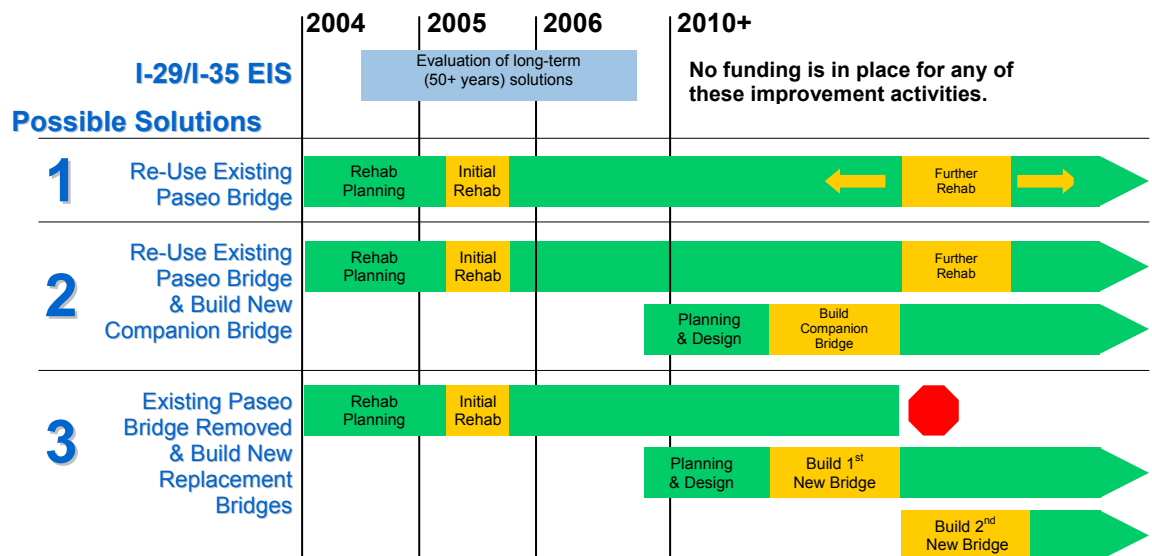
Paseo Bridge Rehab

As MoDOT announced in the spring of 2004, the Paseo Bridge will be rehabilitated during the summer of 2005. That work will include closing the bridge for several months. The I-29/I-35 EIS will help decide long-term plans for the crossing, including deciding if existing bridge will be re-used – which will involve further rehabilitation/deck replacement – or if the bridge will be completely replaced. **The team is also working with neighbors and city officials to address concerns about additional traffic on local streets during next summer's rehabilitation.**

Rehab and/or construction of the Missouri River crossing will be phased:

Each of the three possible solutions still includes the initial rehab of the Paseo Bridge in 2005.

Any additional construction or rehabilitation is not likely until after the year 2010.



For more information or to provide input:

- Phone: MoDOT District 4 at (816) 622-6500
- E-mail: I29I35EIS@htnb.com
- Write: I-29/I-35 EIS, c/o HNTB, 715 Kirk Drive, Kansas City, MO 64105